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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 001065

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SUBJECT: PM TUSK PLACES SAFE BETS IN VACANT CABINET POSTS

REF: A. WARSAW 1039

[1](#)B. WARSAW 710

Classified By: Political Counselor Dan Sainz for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: PM Tusk's appointees to replace cabinet ministers dismissed in the wake of Poland's "Gambling-gate" scandal (ref A) reflect a preference for continuity, stability, and expertise over big names or Civic Platform (PO) party insiders. On October 14, Tusk tapped Malopolska Governor Jerzy Miller to take over the Interior Ministry and elevated Deputy Justice Minister Krzysztof Kwiatkowski and Deputy Sports Minister Adam Giersz. Tusk also replaced the controversial head of the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau (CBA), Mariusz Kaminski, with a career law enforcement officer, Pawel Wojtunik. Considered more expert than politician, Wojtunik is highly regarded by the opposition Law and Justice (PiS). Tusk had previously been criticized by the opposition, and even some within PO, for handing out cabinet posts as rewards to regional party bosses, rather than choosing better-qualified experts for those jobs. The new cabinet appointees -- all experts with a softer touch -- underscore Tusk's personal vested interest in quickly regaining public trust and confidence. END SUMMARY.

IT'S MILLER TIME

[1](#)2. (SBU) Governor of Malopolska since November 2007, Jerzy Miller is a political independent with close ties to PO. He is widely viewed as a professional and dedicated public official who is willing to work across party lines to achieve consensus. He is also highly regarded for his ability to obtain necessary funding -- even in the midst of budget cuts -- for institutions he oversees. Miller is pro-American and has been a strong supporter of U.S. investment and business in Malopolska. Over the past two decades, Miller has served as Deputy Mayor of Warsaw, chairman of the National Health Fund, a board member of the National Bank of Poland, Deputy Governor of Malopolska, and a Deputy Finance Minister. Miller is 56 years old and married.

[1](#)3. (C) Miller reluctantly accepted the position of Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration (MSWiA), reportedly only after Tusk made him an "offer he couldn't refuse" -- i.e., Miller risked losing the PM's confidence if he said no. Miller told media he does not foresee making any sweeping changes or undertaking any house-cleaning in the Ministry. Miller's pro-American views and rhetoric suggest he is open to improving bilateral cooperation on law enforcement and homeland security issues. He may be a willing ally in efforts to improve U.S.-EU cooperation on a wide range of Justice and Home Affairs priorities.

¶4. (C) As the head of MSWiA, Miller will also be responsible for managing the Polish government's entire public administration apparatus, in addition to coordinating counter-terrorism policy and overseeing Polish law enforcement, border guards, crisis and emergency management, public safety, and critical infrastructure protection. He also oversees ethnic and religious minority issues, including the ongoing process of restitution of communal religious property. As governor, Miller has been an active supporter of minorities in Malopolska. For instance, Miller recently helped to resolve a conflict near Limanova to the benefit of the local Roma community, which wanted to build a Cultural House over the objections of the village's mayor.

STATUS QUO AT JUSTICE MINISTRY

¶5. (C) Krzysztof Kwiatkowski is a rising star in the PO. He sits on the party's national board. He has been Deputy Justice Minister since February 2009 and a senator since ¶2007. He previously served as deputy speaker of the Lodz provincial assembly and deputy mayor of the city of Zgierz. He was also personal secretary to PM Jerzy Buzek (1997-2001). Kwiatkowski is 38 years old, an IVLP alumnus, and a long-time Embassy contact. He has taken a keen interest in strengthening U.S.-Polish mutual legal assistance cooperation. Kwiatkowski has taken a less controversial tack on judicial reform and addressing perceptions of corruption within the judiciary than that of his predecessor, Andrzej Czumak (ref B). Kwiatkowski favors using alternative pre-trial monitoring and sentencing to address problems with prolonged pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding. He

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also supports using information technology to improve transparency, streamline case management, and reduce court backlogs.

PLAYER-COACH TO HEAD SPORTS MINISTRY

¶6. (C) Adam Giersz has been Deputy Sports Minister since November 2008. In the 1980s and 1990s, Giersz coached Poland's national table tennis team and subsequently served as president of the Polish Table Tennis Federation and president of the Polish Sports Confederation. He has risen through the ranks of the Sports Ministry over the past decade. Giersz has been deeply involved in planning for the 2012 European Soccer Cup, which Poland will jointly host with Ukraine. This was reportedly the key factor in Tusk's decision to promote Giersz.

A LESS POLITICAL ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU

¶7. (C) Tusk's decision to replace Mariusz Kaminski (appointed by the previous PiS Government to head the CBA in 2006) was the most politically risky. Although Kaminski has been charged by prosecutors in Rzeszow with overstepping his authority and with forging documents in a 2007 corruption case, the move drew recriminations from PiS officials and some media outlets because Kaminski was the driving force behind the "Gamble-gate" corruption investigation. Tusk and other PO officials countered the PiS accusations by accusing Kaminski of using the investigation to wage a political war against the Government and by supporting a parliamentary investigation of the corruption charges against the government. President Kaczynski argued that Tusk's dismissal of Kaminski was illegal, because Tusk did not wait for a (non-binding) legal opinion from the President's Chancellery. A PiS spokesman said the party would not pursue charges against Tusk, but Kaminski is expected to appeal the dismissal in an administrative court. The CBA's new acting chief, Pawel Wojtunik, is a career law enforcement officer who had headed the Polish Central Investigation Bureau since ¶2007. Considered more expert than politician, Wojtunik is

highly regarded by the opposition.

COMMENT

18. (C) While Tusk's public approval numbers remain steady at around 50 percent, only 29 percent are pleased with his Government's performance, a drop from 35 percent a year ago. The percentage that disapprove of the Government's performance has risen from 57 percent to 65 percent over the same period. There has always been a wide disparity between Tusk's sky-high popularity and public dissatisfaction with his Government, in part because supporters still view him as the man who "restored optimism" to Polish politics in 2007. While Tusk remains the most popular and most trusted politician in Poland, he is keenly aware of the need to restore public confidence in his Government in order to bolster his prospects for the presidency in 2010. Naming qualified, well-respected, and largely nonpartisan experts to fill the cabinet posts vacated in the wake of the corruption scandal will help, but -- as Tusk himself has publicly acknowledged -- he still has his work cut out for him.

19. (U) This message was coordinated with ConGen Krakow.
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